

76. (New) The method of claim 74, wherein the at least one of a plurality of criteria includes a criterion to indicate the number of times the authorization key can be used by the second party to obtain access.

77. (New) The method of claim 74, wherein the at least one of a plurality of criteria includes a criterion designating the category of the first party's personal information that can be accessed by the second party using the authorization key.

REMARKS

This response supplements the reply filed on February 24, 2003 with the Request for Continued Examination under 37 C.F.R. §1.114. Applicants have discussed with Examiner Darrow the reasons for rejection and the art cited in a previous office communication. This response is believed to address all issues and place the application in a condition for allowance.

Interview with Examiner Darrow

Applicants thank Examiner Darrow for the courtesies shown during telephone discussions in March 2003. No agreement was reached.

Claim Cancellation without Prejudice and New Claims

Claims 1-5, 7-11, 14-24, 26-30 and 44-47 are canceled without prejudice and new claims 48-77 are added. These new claims are substantially the same as the canceled claims except for the differences as outlined herein.

Former claim 23, which is a duplicate of claim 22, is canceled. In its place is added a new independent claim, Claim 68, which recites in a different form the steps that are believed to be novel and nonobvious. Examiner is respectfully requested to enter this claim.

Broader canceled claims are canceled without prejudice and Applicants intend to prosecute them in a continuation application. The total number of independent claims is increased by one, but the total remains 3. However, because the total number of claims is 3, for which a fee is already paid, Applicants believe that no fee is due with this

amendment. The independent claims recite the language that **the first party assigns** the at least one of a plurality of security levels at any granularity to each information object. By so reciting, Applicants do not concede that this is essential to overcome the prior art. An explanation of this is provided below in detail. No new matter is added as a result of these changes. Examiner is respectfully requested to review and enter the changes.

Independent Claims with the recitation “by the first party”

Applicants present these revised claims in order to facilitate an allowance of at least some claims, but reserve the right to claim and argue for broader claims in a continuation application. In particular, Applicants believe that claims directed to assigning a security level to each information object—irrespective of who makes such assignment, whether the first party, the second party or a third party or any combination of two or more of these parties—is still patentable over the cited art. Applicants contend that Ho, for example, does not describe the step of “assigning at least one of a plurality of security levels at any granularity to each information object”. Applicants, therefore, intend to file a continuation application directed to those and the currently restricted claims. Therefore, the present amendment should not be considered a concession of or waiver of any rights due to Applicant. *See Festo Corp. v. Shoketsu Kinzoku Kogyo Kaushiki Co.*, 122 S. Ct. 1831, 1840 (2002).

Applicants intend to prosecute other features that are disclosed in this application, which features were alluded to in prior responses to office actions. For example, applicants intend to prosecute the claims directed toward automatic filling of online forms using the first party’s personal information, updating the first party’s information by third parties to enable transmission of information to other parties for approval (i.e., in the case of an approval by an insurance carrier of the costs of a medical procedure), and automatically notifying interested parties of any updated information either at a predetermined time or when information is updated.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the present set of claims is believed to be in a condition for allowance. Applicants request an early notice of allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Certificate of Faxing

I certify that this paper is faxed on April 8, 2003 to (703) 746-7238.


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